

REMARKS

Claims 1-57 are pending. Claims 36, 50, 56 and 57 have been amended without narrowing their scope, and simply to improve their form.

The Office Action did not include the initialed SB/08 form that accompanied the Information Disclosure Statement filed with the initial application papers. It is requested that this SB/08 be initialed and included with the next Office Action.

Claims 56 and 57 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §§ 101, 112 as being “program” claims. Those claims have been amended to recite a computer readable medium. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

With respect to the restriction requirement, Applicants provisionally elect Group II, claims 27-55. However, the Examiner is requested to consider the following.

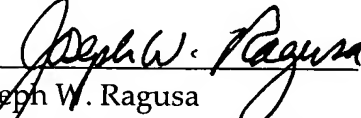
The claims of Group II are method claims generally corresponding to the apparatus claims of Group I. Any search done in examining Group I would be co-extensive with a search for Group II. Similarly, Group III claims correspond to certain method claims in Group II, and would not entail a further search.

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that examining all three groups would not entail an undue burden on the Examiner. For this reason it is respectfully requested that the Examiner reconsider the restriction requirement and examine all the claims together.

An early and favorable action on the merits is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,

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